

Thousands March In L.A. to Protest Raid on Panthers

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 11 (UPI) — Seven police divisions were placed on "precautionary" tactical alert today when a crowd of between 1,000 and 3,000 persons joined in a march on City Hall to protest what they called "police repression of the black community."

The rally ended without incident.

Monitors wearing pink armbands circulated through the crowd to keep order as black elected officials addressed the group, calling for a full investigation into a five-hour gun battle when police raided a Black Panther headquarters Monday.

Security guards patrolled the corridors inside City Hall, but the demonstrators made no move to enter the building.

The Rev. H. H. Brookins warned demonstrators to remain peaceful to "prove once and for all that black people can be orderly."

However, Angela Davis, a black professor at UCLA and an admitted Communist whom the Board of Regents attempted to fire earlier this year, urged the demonstrators to "see City Hall does not function, even if it means occupying it, until they call off those pigs who are occupying our community."

The march was urged by a number of Negro organizations following Monday's raid. Both the NAACP and the Urban League said they supported the rally because of their concern for the rights of all Negroes, not just those of the Panthers.

March Urged

State Sen. Mervyn M. Dymally called for the rally at a sidewalk news conference Wednesday outside the bullet-pocked Panther headquarters.

He and Assemblymen Leon T. Ralph and Bill Greene, both Los Angeles Democrats, also demanded a full-scale congressional investigation into the shootout.

Ralph said the battle might have been avoided if black elected officials had been contacted, because they may have

been able to arrange for the surrender of the Panther weapons without violence.

"Why is it that every time they (the police) come into the black community they come in shooting?" he asked.

In Chicago State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan challenged surviving Black Panther participants of a gun battle with police there to take the detector tests about the shootout in which two Panther leaders were killed.

He said he will let 14 policemen take lie tests about their raid on a Panther apartment, which yielded an arsenal of shotguns, rifles, carbines and handguns, if those Panthers who were wounded or seized will do the same.

The head of the police raiding party said the black militants fired first—before the police entered the apartment. He said police issue five "hold fire" orders before the Panthers stopped shooting.

Sgt. Daniel Groth, who led the police group, gave a detailed version of the raid in a copyrighted interview with the Chicago Tribune. At the same time, the state's attorney's office released official police photographs which it said conclusively proved the Panthers opened the battle by firing a shotgun blast through the apartment door.

Groth's account said that after repeated gunfire was directed at police from Panther leader Fred Hampton's bedroom, police entered and found him lying face down on a bed—his head facing the bedroom door, his arms hanging over the foot of the bed near a .45 caliber automatic and a shotgun.

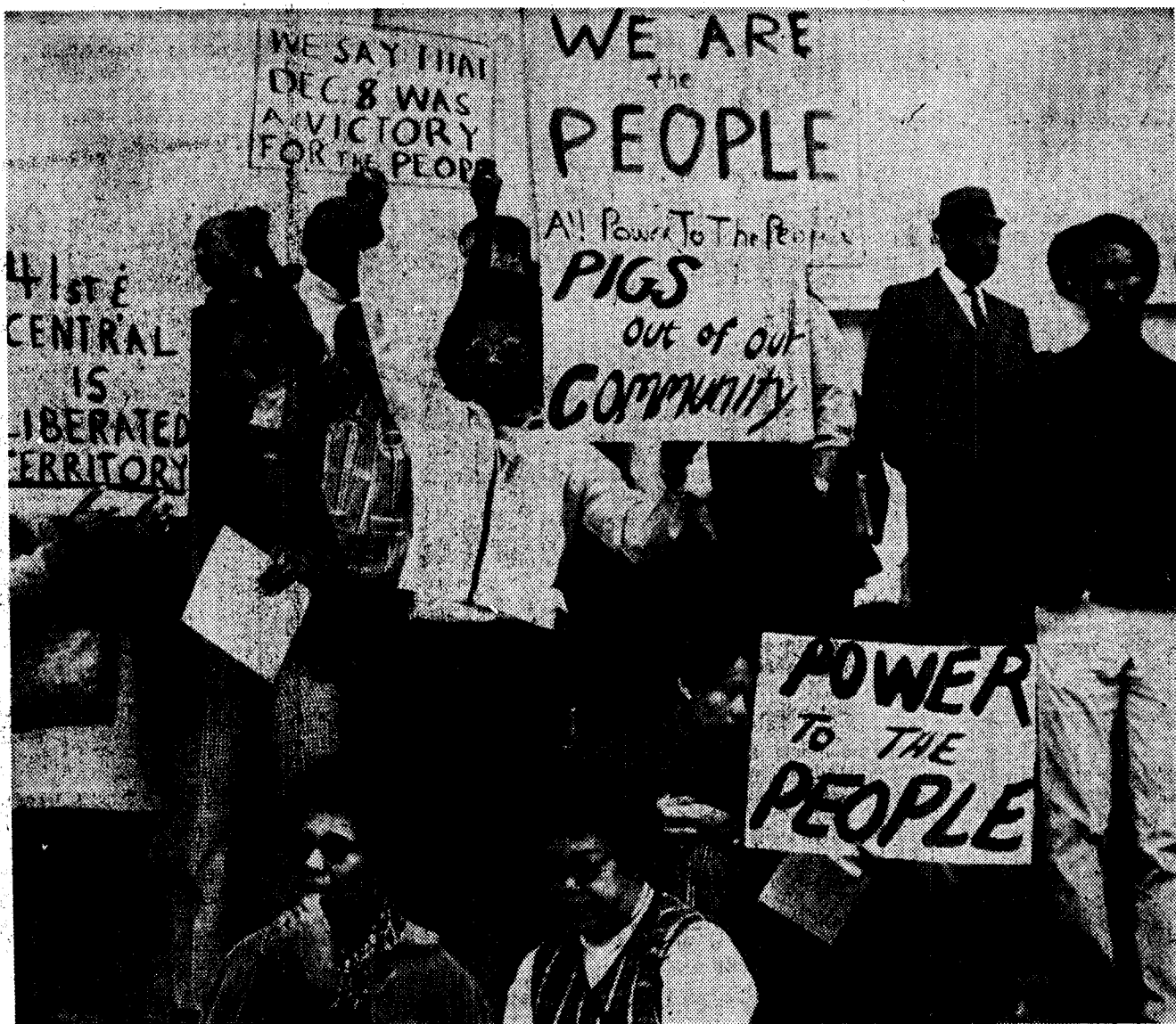
Hanrahan told reporters, "I have no objection to any objective investigation."

Six black congressmen had announced in Washington they would hold an unofficial hearing to determine if Chicago police "murdered" the two Panthers.

They told a news conference that they had invited Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, police officials and members of the Black Panther Party to testify at a hearing in Chicago Dec. 20.

One of the six, Rep. William L. Clay (D-Mo.), said "thousands" of blacks had been "murdered" by police in the last decade and that the purpose of the hearing was to determine if this happened in the deaths of Hampton and Mark Clark.

The other five members of the House calling for the hearing were Reps. Charles C. Diggs Jr. (D-Mich.), chairman, Augustus F. Hawkins (D-Calif.); John Conyers (D-Mich.); Shirley Chisholm (D-N.Y.); and Louis Stokes (D-OHIO).



Associated Press

Demonstrators at Los Angeles City Hall protest raids by police on Black Panther headquarters.